

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
Rev. James G. Baldwin



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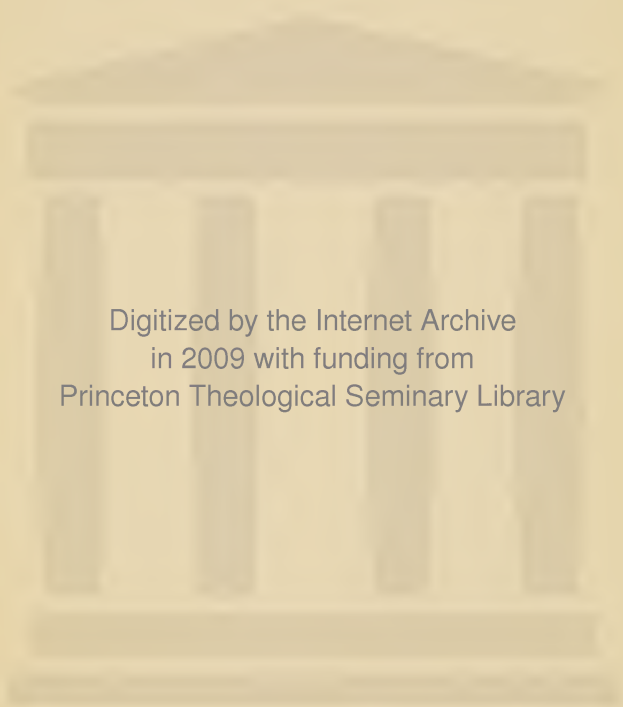


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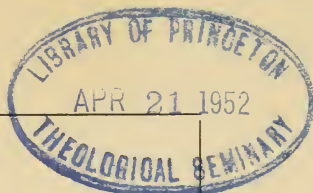
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JAMES GILLETTE BALDWIN



Autobiography of
✓
Rev. James G. Baldwin

PUBLISHED BY THE
EAST OHIO CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED
BRETHREN CHURCH



1912

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DAYTON, OHIO

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The East Ohio Conference requested its honored and revered senior member, Rev. J. G. Baldwin, to write the story of his life that the conference might publish it for the instruction and inspiration of the people. The present volume is the result, and it is now sent forth with gratitude to the author for his life and story, and with confidence that the book will be a blessing to all who read it.

Committee.

D e d i c a t i o n

TO my beloved wife, faithful companion, and partner of my joys and sorrows, my chief earthly help to comfort and cheer me in affliction and trial; one who bore all the discomforts of an itinerant's life for almost sixty-two years without one word of complaint, and who passed away peacefully as an innocent child to the paradise of God on Sabbath morning, August 28, 1910; this narrative is lovingly dedicated, that her memory may be cherished and her character revered as a pattern and guide to others.

INTRODUCTION.

I would rather some one else would write the story of my life. I have feared that there would be a temptation to introduce too much of the *ego*, that so many capital I's would be needed that the printers might be embarrassed in providing this important letter. However, it has come to me of late that my own life and labors are better known to myself than to any one else. Why then should it be a duty to be dreaded, or to be left to another who could not know the ins and outs of my life as well as myself? If the critic would permit I should be glad to write it in my individual style, so that those who have heard me preach and sing and pray would say, "That is Baldwin."

I do not wish to write out all my mistakes and crookedness, but I shall try to chronicle as much as I may of the good that it has been mine to do and enjoy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The time in which I have lived has been the most wonderful in the history of the world's progress. For many generations men appeared to be content to move in the treadmill rounds of their ancestors. Within my own lifetime it was deemed a wicked interference with the laws of the Almighty to invent a vehicle that would travel more than fifteen miles an hour, but I have lived to see the age of express trains, aeroplanes, and wireless telegraphy. I have lived in the age of fat lamps, oil lamps, on

into the time of gas and electric illumination, when the darkness of night is turned into the light of day. I saw the first train of passenger cars that ran in the United States, and its speed of seventeen miles an hour filled the people along the route with awe and amazement. I was present, in 1838, when a professor of chemistry stretched a wire from one corner to another of a large hall to show his auditors how messages might be sent from one point to another, but he remarked that it was hardly possible that it ever would be utilized for long distances on account of the expense. Now, if I start a message from Akron, Ohio, at sunrise to my friends in Seattle, Washington, the message reaches them three hours before sunup, although the sun is doing its best—plodding along at the rate of a thousand miles an hour.

When my father purchased a cookstove, the neighbors came in to see it put up. They stood around the kitchen wall, as far from it as possible, in mortal fear that it would explode as soon as the fire got hot enough for cooking.

Withal, it is an age which affords the best opportunity for man to be good, great, and noble, so I thank God that he arranged that in this period of the world's history I should be born and live. If one fails of being good, it is because he chooses the evil.

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CHAPTER I.

PARENTS.

My parents, Isaac Baldwin and Sarah Gillette, were both born in Litchfield, Connecticut, father in 1800, and mother in 1804. They were married by Dr. Lyman Beecher in 1822. Soon after their marriage they moved to Burlington, Hartford County, Connecticut, where I was born December 15, 1824, being the first born of eight sons, there being no daughters.



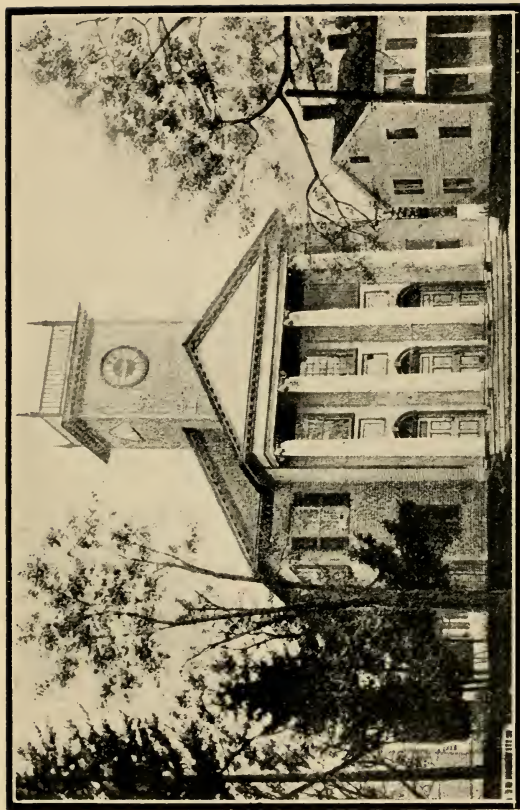
Dr. Lyman Beecher at times was absent-minded. On the day of the wedding of my father and mother, the preacher had one of these lapses of memory. Mother's home was three miles northeast of Litchfield, and there the guests, sixty in number, were gathered at ten o'clock for the marriage ceremony. Ten o'clock arrived and no preacher appeared. At twelve o'clock a messenger was sent to look up Dr. Beecher, and it was learned that he had gone to Bantan Lake, three miles southwest of town, on a fishing excursion, having forgotten all about the

wedding in his quest of fish. Dr. Beecher was found, and reached the place of the wedding ceremony at three in the afternoon, and all was as merry as a marriage bell. The circumstance was the occasion of much merriment in the town for many years. On a visit to the old place thirty years afterward, when the older people learned that I was the son of Isaac Baldwin, whom old Dr. Beecher came very nearly not marrying, they laughed as heartily as ever. Many pleasantries were indulged in concerning my narrow escape from having no father or mother. But Isaac Baldwin and Sarah Gillette were both members of Dr. Beecher's church, and I suppose he knew they were foreordained not to get away.

When I was between four and five years of age my father sold his place at Burlington and moved to Litchfield, where he rented the farm formerly owned by my maternal grandfather, a hilly, rocky, thin-soiled farm, but fine for apples and pears, with springs of pure water, just the place to lay a good base for robust health. The farm was three miles northeast of Litchfield Town Hill, as it was called. It was mother's home, the place of her birth, both natural and spiritual.

The story of my mother's conversion, told to me when I was seven years old, made a deep impression upon me.

One beautiful September evening my mother with a few of the young persons of the vicinity went to the little red schoolhouse, about a mile and a half



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, LITCHFIELD, CONN.
Lyman Beecher's Church, where J. G. Baldwin attended Sunday school

from her home to hear the eccentric Lorenzo Dow preach. The appointment had been made by him one year previous.

At the time there was great excitement over the noted preacher, who was a "Billy" Sunday of his day. The people flocked to hear him, the old and the young, the curious and the critical, saints and sinners, all eager to hear what he would say next.

On that particular evening when my mother went to hear him, his subject was prayer. "Would God hear and answer prayer, and is it possible for us to know that our sins are pardoned?" Mother said he made it so plain to her that there could be but one answer to the question. It was a blessed, astounding fact, and nearly a new revelation to her and to most of his hearers, for they had never regarded salvation in that light before.

At the close of the sermon the preacher proposed that the audience test the matter in the following manner: All those who would dare to sincerely pray in secret twice a day for four weeks arise to their feet, and by this act make their vow in the sight of God and men and angels. In four weeks he was to preach in the schoolhouse again. Twenty persons arose, my mother being one of the number. She said that the crowd was as solemn and serious as if it had been a funeral.

As the young people returned to their homes from the service they were quiet and thoughtful. They separated at her father's house bidding her a pleasant good-night. She stood a moment watching

them as they walked along the highway, the moon shining clear and bright, and as she stood there the thought of the vow she had made that evening to pray twice a day for four weeks came to her with wonderful impressiveness. "Why not begin to-night?" came a question as in an audible voice. It was so distinct as to be irresistible, and immediately she began to pour out her soul for light and divine satisfaction. The struggle was hard and protracted, but the victory came, and so complete was it that for sixty years she never expressed a doubt as to her prayer being heard and answered.

One pleasant Sabbath afternoon mother related the story of her conversion to us boys. She said that one thing that quite surprised her was that on entering the house she discovered that it was two o'clock in the morning.

I was seven years old and my brother four at the time she related her experience to us. As she finished telling the old, old story, we sang a hymn together, then all knelt about the old kitchen chair, where our mother poured her soul out in simple, earnest prayer to God that her boys might early find the Pearl of great price, and if it should be his will, that they might be spared to grow up to be good men and preachers of the gospel.

We boys often said in after years that we never have heard a testimony of prayer that followed us everywhere as the simple story of that Sabbath afternoon, and now after eighty years are passed away the scene is as plainly fixed upon memory's page

as if it had occurred but yesterday. How could we get away from such a mother! She lived to see her prayer answered in regard to both of us. She was sixteen years of age when converted, and passed on before at the age of eighty.

In our home, family worship was maintained with strictness, and the duty of obedience to all law, whether of God, the government, or the home, was taught us. Parental authority, when exercised in the Lord, was to be obeyed without questioning. I have heard father say, "Boys, you must obey the rules of this house if you stay here till you are forty years old." This was said when some of the boys showed a disinclination to be quiet during the hour for family worship.

The keeping of the Sabbath as a sacred day was insisted upon, and it was rigidly observed in all the country in which my youthful days were passed. Henry Ward Beecher is reported to have said that the roosters crowed psalm tunes on the Sabbath in New England. I do not remember hearing them do it, but I do remember that there was no cooking done on that day, which was kept from sundown on Saturday until sundown on Sabbath. A holy calm was upon all nature. I may be thought to be Puritanical, but I would greatly prefer the quiet of the New England Sabbath to the noise and cheering and baseball games of the present Lord's day.

My parents were members of Dr. Lyman Beecher's church, and when they moved to Bur-

lington took their certificates of membership with them, and on their return to Litchfield their membership was again placed in their home church, where it remained until they removed to Ohio, in 1841. Arriving in Ohio, they did not unite with the Presbyterian Church, but worshiped with the Methodist Episcopal and United Brethren churches in the vicinity of their home.

After I entered the itinerant ministry of the United Brethren Church, and they had moved to a locality west of Wadsworth, Ohio, in 1855, I held a meeting in the schoolhouse of their district, and organized a new society of United Brethren. When the invitation was extended for membership to my great surprise and joy my parents came, with others, to receive the right hand of fellowship in the United Brethren Church. They had not told me of their purpose, and I was greatly astonished, and for a time did not know whether my feet were on the earth or in the air.

In 1857, my parents moved to Ganges, Allegan County, Michigan, where two of my younger brothers had gone to carve out a home in the woods. There was no preaching of the United Brethren Church in that vicinity, but father heard of a preacher living some forty miles northeast of Ganges. Immediately he visited him, and was successful in securing him to hold a series of meetings at their schoolhouse. The revival meetings were held in due time, people were converted, a church was organized, a house of worship was built, and a

circuit of six appointments had grown up when I visited my parents in 1863.

Father and mother were greatly devoted to the work in that locality, and always insisted upon calling it my circuit, and engaged me to come and preach for them at all the appointments. That was in 1863, when the Civil War caused much distraction. More than twenty years later another source of distraction arose by reason of the forward step the United Brethren took in 1885 regarding its dealing with secret societies. I hear that the bitterness incident to those days has largely passed away, and it is the hope of all that peace and harmony may prevail, and the work of the Church go forward with new impetus.

My parents continued to pray and labor in this locality to the end of their earthly lives. After fifty-seven years of wedded life, on August 15, 1879, father passed over the river to his eternal rest, and on the 21st day of the next March my mother followed on. They are buried in a beautiful cemetery on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, where the waters of the lake seem to be singing a lullaby to soothe them to rest until the summons shall come to them to arise from their dusty couch and meet the King in his beauty and to live with him and his loved ones forevermore.

CHAPTER II.

SCHOOL DAYS.

It was my good fortune to attend six district schools, and to have three terms at an academy in Norfolk, Connecticut, in preparation for entering Yale. This hope was never realized.

The first district school that I attended was about a mile and a half from my home northeast of Litchfield. Across the rocks, hills, and huckleberry patches I trudged for some four years. Then moving northeast of the Town Hill, my place was in a school a mile from the courthouse, which I attended until I was thirteen. One winter was spent with an uncle at Farmington, Connecticut, where I did chores and attended school. The next winter I was at my grandmother's on East Litchfield Hill, where I attended a little red schoolhouse and added to my stock of knowledge. On moving to Sheron, Connecticut, I attended the district school two terms, and at the age of fifteen and one-half years I landed safe and sound at Norfolk Academy, to grapple with the higher branches of English education. The three terms spent in the academy were of great benefit to me, as I there was led to see that there were vast fields of knowledge that before I had not dreamed of. Then, alas, for my hopes! we sold out and hiked to the woods of Ohio, when I supposed my opportunities for more learning were at an end.

In the autumn after our arrival in Ohio, my father said to me: "Don't you think you could teach school over in Wayne County if you tried? I think you can, and I have boys enough to help me in the wagon shop without you. I will give you your time, and you go and see what you can do."

I thanked him and started at once to secure a school. The first one I applied for was southeast of Burbank, Wayne County, Ohio. I interviewed three directors who appeared pleased to employ me at \$10.50 a month and board. The board was to be secured among the patrons of the school.

Now the procuring of a certificate to teach was the cause of some anxiety. The day after securing the school I set out for Wooster, the county seat of Wayne County. Arriving in the town I made inquiry at a dry-goods store for the officials who were authorized to issue a teacher's certificate. The man of whom I made the inquiry informed me that one of the examiners, Mr. Schugars, was a bookkeeper in the store. I was introduced to him, and he informed me that it was not necessary to look up the other two examiners, as he had the authority to do the work, and to issue a certificate if the examination proved satisfactory. He remarked that he was greatly pleased to have a young man so recently from the Eastern schools to come among the Wayne County people to teach, believing that some new ideas in teaching might thus be secured. By the time the examiner was through with his encouraging speech my trepidation was all gone, and

I was ready for the examination, let it be what it may.

My examination was about as follows:

"Mr. Baldwin, you may please write a sentence on this sheet of paper."

I wrote the sentence, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

After scanning the writing a moment he said, "The writing is good enough; you may please parse the sentence."

This I did to his satisfaction, except that we disagreed as to the part of speech "that" is. In the dispute that followed I told him he was certainly mistaken and gave my reasons, whereupon he admitted that I was right.

Then I was asked to bound the State of Ohio, which I did, and the certificate was forthwith issued, and I paid the fee of seventy-five cents. The examiner volunteered the information that many persons came to be examined who were not able to bound the State of Ohio, and with that revelation I thought it was about time for some light from the East.

Armed with my certificate I was prepared to enter upon my duties as a school-teacher. My school enrolled sixty-nine pupils of all ages, sizes, and sorts, and it met in a log schoolhouse eighteen by twenty-four feet in size. My work began November 1, 1841, and I had to put in twenty-six days a month. There was no uniformity in text-books, there being five kinds of arithmetics, two of spelling

books, a dozen different readers, and three varieties of geographies, but there was not a grammar of any kind. The people generally deemed grammar unnecessary, and many in the district were opposed to its being taught, although it was agreed that I might try it.

School was opened each morning with a short scripture reading and with singing and prayer, and if there was any opposition to such a proceeding it did not appear. The patrons of the school were mostly members of the church, and as I boarded around I was called upon to conduct the family worship.

The school I taught had the practice of barring out the teacher of the schoolhouse at Christmas or New Year's, sometimes on both days, and demanding a treat of some sort before they would allow him to enter and proceed with his work. A hint of such doings came to my ears a few days before Christmas. My plan was this: I would treat the school, but I believed all would feel better if they would omit the old barring out custom that might cause trouble and spoil the fellowship of the occasion. The older scholars readily agreed to my plan, and I cast about to find something suitable for the treat. I purposed to make a holiday of the day, when no school work should be done. We were to have the treat at the proper time, after which we would have ball games, races, wrestling, jumping, and other athletics. Fighting was to be barred because it was Christmas Day. There were

to be plenty of Rambo apples, which I was sure could be found in my grand uncle's cellar, for I had helped to store them in the fall, and they were the finest I ever saw. It makes my mouth water as I write about them. In addition there were to be doughnuts in abundance, such as my mother made.

On Christmas morning, assisted by my two brothers and some of their boy chums, we toted the bags and baskets containing the apples and doughnuts toward the schoolhouse. Arriving there we found the doors barred and filled with the youngsters of the district. We expected some resistance, but when our barricaded opponents beheld the boys and baskets their belligerency subsided, and they soon capitulated. We entered and after a song suited to the day and occasion, the treat was distributed. The day was spent in sports and contests, and without a fight or an oath or a jar. We had some sweet cider, but there was nothing to intoxicate. The sentiment in the community was such that, with very few exceptions, intoxicants were not used at log rollings, barn raisings, harvests, weddings, or funerals.

I was eighteen years of age ten days before the Christmas treat, and had boarded in nearly all the homes of the district. Having started in with family prayers in the first home in which I boarded, I continued the practice and was not once forbidden in the entire district. I have sometimes wondered at my temerity, but I had found the Pearl of great

price on the 19th of the preceding August, and soon learned that God's law was "use or lose." It was to use the grace that was given me that I led in the family worship in the homes where I boarded. I enjoyed this service well, but in some homes it was not easy to do my duty.

There was one patron who sent five bright children to the school. He was reported to me to be an infidel and a wily critic. When the time came for me to board in this home I had great trepidation. Would it be right for me to omit the family worship feature of my program? So great was my anxiety that I spent a week in much thought and earnest prayer. The resolve finally was made that at the first meal I would wait for him to give me an invitation to ask the blessing before eating, as he knew that to be my practice at other homes. In due time all were seated about the well-filled table, and a painful pause ensued, my heart thumping so loud that I thought others must hear it. All at once, without any explanations or preliminaries, my host said, "Do your duty, Jimmie." Of course, I said grace and felt free to conduct family worship with prayer and song.

The next summer I met this man on a public road, when he gave me the sad story of his life—how he had left his home, his kindred knowing nothing of his whereabouts; how he had lived a double life, his family knowing nothing of his former irregularities. After my marriage I lived on a farm adjoining his, and he often confided to me the state

of his mind, confessing the terrible mistake he had made, and with tears besought me to remember him in my prayers. He often thanked me for my interest in him and his family, and thus I was rewarded for my faithfulness in his home.

I have great reason to thank God for the training I thus received in my early Christian life. I was led to pray much in secret for help in doing my duty in the homes where I lived. Boarding around was a fine school for the study of human nature, living among all sorts of people and needing a good deal of tact in many of my relations to them.

CHAPTER III.

CONVERSION.

For a year and a half before coming to Ohio, I was in great distress of mind concerning my spiritual state. I was rather glad to move into a new country, to break away from my old companions and form new associations, with the hope that under the new circumstances the atmosphere might be more favorable for me to lead a genuine Christian life. I expected there to find less of temptation and fewer allurements to draw me into paths of folly and sin. Days and nights were spent in prayer and anguish of spirit, and the journey to the new country was hailed with gladness.

In due time I found myself with my parents and family located in the southern part of Medina County, Ohio, arriving the 14th day of May, 1841. A place was found for me to work on the farm of my mother's uncle, where the summer was occupied in the usual varied tasks of farm life. In the fall, with the farm work well in hand, and the ground plowed and ready for wheat sowing, I felt that I could be spared for a few days. On the morning of August 18, 1841, I said to my grand uncle, "I would like to go to the camp meeting over Sabbath and see what it looks like."

"This is Friday," he said, "and you may rig up right away and stay over Sunday, if you want

to, but don't get in with the rowdies and make a disturbance."

He explained that often a lot of hoodlums from the towns round about would go to the camp meeting for the purpose of making a disturbance. "Don't get into their company," he said. I told him that it was far from my thought to join such a crowd, as ever since I could remember I had felt that I would like to give such fellows a good thrashing, if it were in my power.

After dinner I started for the camp meeting, which was about a mile and a half from where I worked. When about half the journey was completed I came to a place where a large sycamore had stood, and the road had been filled up so as to be even with the top of the stump. I stopped on the stump, and this question came to my mind, "Why am I going to the camp meeting?" In answering this mental question I said to myself that it is a new and strange thing to me, as I have never been to a meeting of the kind, and I want to see if there is a chance for me to become a Christian. I thought that perhaps there would be present some one who could show me how to be a Christian, better than I had ever known. Then another thought came, "Would I act if I knew how?" That question revealed to me the true difficulty. I was a coward. I wanted peace with God, but was ashamed to let any one know it. I had expected to serve the Lord in secret. It became apparent to me that Satan was defeating me through my cowardice.

There, upon that sycamore stump, I vowed that if at the camp meeting an opportunity should be given me to show my colors and to tell in public that it was my desire to be a Christian, I would at once accept the opportunity, even if it killed me. My unrest had become unbearable, and I could endure it no longer. Immediately a sense of relief came to me, and I felt as if I had wings, and in this frame of mind I continued my way until I came in sight and hearing of the camp. All at once it occurred to me that the crowd and the new and strange surroundings might frighten me, and that I would continue to show myself a coward. Thereupon I again vowed, as when I stood on that stump alone before God, that I would publicly confess Christ.

The first sermon preached that evening was by Rev. John McNal. His text was "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Proverbs 29: 1.

The text itself fit me. As the preacher proceeded, he portrayed my life, and I could not help asking, "How does the preacher know all about my condition?" The sermon was a voice from heaven to me, and I saw that to refuse to act would be at a fearful risk.

At the conclusion of the discourse the preacher exhorted his unconverted hearers to cease fighting against God, and to do it at once and forever,

since it was an unequal contest, and no mortal could ever win.

The mourner's bench was now introduced, and greatly to my relief I saw at once how I could publicly part company with Satan. My cowardice was gone, and there was a great desire to kneel at that humble place. Without waiting for further pleading I arose and went to the mourner's bench, the first one to reach it. Glancing about, I noticed that there were a number of others kneeling with me, about twenty altogether.

As I kneeled my first thought was, now I am no longer a slave of Satan, but I soon found there was a fierce contest awaiting me. Satan would not let me go so easily. The first person to come to instruct me was a man with whom I had had dealings, and who had tried to cheat me, as I believed. At this there came to me the thought of getting up and leaving the place in disgust. On second thought I said to myself that that would never do, that I was before God with a sincere purpose to find peace.

The battle proceeded until about eleven o'clock when light from heaven came streaming into my soul, and my whole being was overwhelmed with it. I felt that I was new through and through. It seemed that a voice said to me, "Son, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee, go in peace and sin no more." In that light and in the sound of that voice I have traveled over life's thorny road with much joy and cheerfulness for more than sev-

enty years, and often and often have I given thanks to God for giving me such a good start.

The duty of joining church had next to be considered. As I had been converted at a Methodist Episcopal camp meeting, that church had first claims upon me by reason of conquest, but when I considered their practice of closed doors at class meetings and love feasts, and the rule requiring a probation of six months on the part of new members, and some other features of their discipline, all of which were rigidly adhered to, I found them out of harmony with my views of the Bible plan. After some delay and much persuasion and advice, I consented to the six months of trial, in which time I should endeavor to learn more of the polity of that church.

When the six months had expired the probationers were expected to answer several questions before being received into full membership. When the question was asked, "Do you subscribe to the Methodist Episcopal discipline, and are you willing to be governed by it," I replied that I was not able to do this, and my probation was extended.

About this time there arose a strife in that locality in regard to the authority of the preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, there being many who claimed that the laity of the Church had no voice in its government, all power being in the hands of the clergy. In this controversy over the matter of church government about sixty of the members withdrew, and for a space of a year we held serv-

ices in private houses. Preachers of various faiths, as the Lutherans, Wesleyans, and others came to preach to us, and each sought to sweep us all into his net.

Finally a little man with a big voice came among us, and preached and visited through the community, insisting that it would never do to have good sheep so scattered. His name was Joseph Waldorph. By circulating the Book of Discipline of the United Brethren in Christ he persuaded six persons to unite with that denomination in church fellowship. Afterwards, on January 1, 1843, myself and wife with some forty others cast our lot with the United Brethren Church, and I subscribed for the Church paper, *The Religious Telescope*. We were uniting with a Church that had no college or school, and only three log houses of worship that we knew anything about, and not a doctor of divinity in all her borders.

Under the leadership of Joseph Waldorph, we soon built a frame house of worship. A. Simpkins, William Stiles, E. Sluts, S. C. Stewart, John Todd, and others were our pastors and presiding elders. The Weavers had been with us a few times in our disorganized condition. Among the first sermons preached by Jonathan Weaver, afterwards the great bishop, was one delivered during that time in the home of Willian Lamm. The house was crowded, every room being filled, and after preaching there was much praying with a number of conversions, the singing and shouting lasting until after mid-

night. Rev. Alexander Biddle was the first United Brethren preacher I ever heard. He visited in my home for a week when he was eighty-six years of age. It was a time of pleasant reminiscence with us, and we greatly rejoiced together to note how the Church had prospered in the half century since we first met. Churches, colleges, denominational institutions had been established, and the membership increased from 30,000 to 250,000. "To our Lord be all the glory, Amen," exclaimed the old warrior.

CHAPTER IV.

MARRIAGE.

The marriage day came on apace, and two hearts beat as one.

Miss Eleanor Lawrence was the eldest daughter of Aaron B. and Mirtilla Lawrence, of Canaan, Wayne County, Ohio. Both parents were born in that county, the mother being the first white child born in what afterwards became the town of Wooster, the county seat, but at the time of her birth, 1809, it was far from being a town.

The one who was to be my wife, was converted at the same camp meeting where I was, as I learned afterwards, she lacking a month of being twelve years of age. She was one of my pupils in the first school that I taught in that district, and I boarded at her home, where I noted that she was a diffident, but obedient and dutiful daughter. She was also pious and devoted to her Christian duties in a quiet, determined way, and it came to me that she should be my wife. However, she was five years my junior, but I solved that difficulty by deciding that I could wait four years, or perhaps a little longer, as I was only eighteen.

When my winter school term closed her father asked me as to my plans for the summer. I told him that it was my desire to get work on a farm in that vicinity if possible. He said that he needed a hand, and offered me as pay the same as I had received for teaching, \$10.50 a month and board.



J G. BALDWIN AND WIFE
Two Years after Marriage



MRS. BALDWIN AND SON CHARLES McKENDRIE—Aged Five

It was then sugar-making time, and I could go to work at once. I accepted the proposition, but said that as the day was Saturday and that I desired to go to Wooster to get my money for my teaching, I would be ready to begin work on Monday. Thus the contract was made and on to Wooster I went, feeling that somehow my fortune was already secure.

The farm work I found to be strenuous. After the sugar and syrup making, came plowing for oats and sowing. Then came corn planting, followed by the harvest of clover for hay. Then forty-six acres of wheat had to be cut by hand in one way and another, and be bound in sheaves and be stored in the barn. Then came the threshing of some twelve hundred bushels of grain, followed by corn cutting and corn husking, potato digging, the butchering of perhaps a dozen hogs, besides a beef and several sheep. How much there was to do on a farm of one hundred and sixty acres!

But with all the work we attended church twice on Sabbath and prayer meeting every midweek, while family prayers were held each morning and evening. With so many things to do and the time so fully occupied, one might think that there was no time left for courting. But a smile for the one who was the choice of the heart received the answering smile and I felt encouraged. In due time, I ventured to ask the important question, which was answered in the affirmative, but the exact words of the question and answer I am un-

able to recall. Suffice it to say that the agreement was satisfactory to all concerned, and on the 31st day of December, 1846, we were declared husband and wife. The ceremony, performed by Rev. William Emerson, a Lutheran pastor, made it plain to us that we were to cleave to each other "until death do us part."

We were now elected to remain upon the farm and make our home there for a time at least. In some respects we two, who had been made one, were the chief factors in running the farm.

Two sons were given to us. The first born was named William Emerson, born August 13, 1848, and died in his fifth year. The disease was scarlet fever. The physician came a few hours before he passed away, and after an examination and the administration of medicine he informed us that he had done all that it was possible for him to do, and that the child would leave us before the night should pass. He then sang a verse of song and offered a short, earnest prayer for the child and for us, that we might have strength to pass through the ordeal and finally meet in the land where there is no sickness or parting. Upon the doctor's departure I sought to be alone with God for a little while, and went to the barn and asked for grace to know how to say, "Thy will be done." When I returned to the house I found my wife with the child in her arms, carrying him about the room to rest him, as he had feebly requested. When I entered he said to his mother, "Lay me down and let papa carry

me, he is stronger and can do it better." I went forward to take him up and carry him, and as I leaned over to lift him he exclaimed, "Oh, papa, you need not take me; the white, bright beings have come to take me. Don't you see them?" He was gone with these last words.

Our second son was born June 11, 1855, in Canaan, Wayne County, Ohio, and was named Charles McKendrie. He died in Seattle, Washington, May 28, 1900, in his forty-fourth year. After attending the district schools and the public schools of Akron, and after some years at Smithville Academy, he went to Otterbein University, where he graduated in 1878. Two years later he completed the course in the Homeopathic Medical College in Cleveland, and married Alice M. Moore. He began the practice of medicine in Ashland, Ohio. After five years, on account of his wife's health, they went to the Pacific Coast, finally locating in Seattle, where he built up a great practice, being especially skillful in surgery.

In the winter of 1899, a neighboring physician desiring to attend medical lectures, secured our son to look after his patients in his absence. An epidemic of grip and typhoid fever called for such service that led to overwork. Taking his bed and diagnosing his own case, he told his wife that he could not recover. He made arrangements at once in regard to his affairs, and asked to be laid to rest in the place where he had done his last work, sending to his parents the message that they were

in his last thoughts, as he passed over to the home beyond. He was a deacon in the Presbyterian Church, and a useful man.

With hesitancy I come to record the illness and demise of my beloved wife. After an illness of four months she peacefully and without pain or fear passed away on a Sabbath morning, August 28, 1910, being nearly eighty years old.

She had been soundly converted on the 19th day of August, 1841, and was steadfast until the Master called, "Come home." She was my companion in joy, in sorrow, in toils and labors abundant for almost sixty-four years, walking by my side, keeping step, never complaining in discouragements, faithful and hopeful always. She was a faithful helper, a safe counselor and guide in spiritual affairs, always apparently intuitively knowing what was right.

I bless and revere her precious memory as she waits within the portals of the city, just a little way within, watching, I think, for my safe arrival.

"A land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow, rests no stain;
And those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted, meet again."

CHAPTER V.

LICENSED TO PREACH.

The church of which I was a member, recommended me to the quarterly conference of the United Brethren Church for license to preach. Quarterly conference met in my home church, November 19, 1848. Rev. S. C. Stewart was presiding elder, and Rev. Eli Slutz was pastor. There were present eleven other members, the total being thirteen. The presiding elder examined me on the questions asked in the Book of Discipline, and as was the custom, I retired from the room in order that the members might freely express their views as to the fitness of the candidate.

I gladly retired and then spent nearly two hours marching up and down in front of the church to keep warm, as it was very cold. At times I was tempted to retire for good and go home and give my chance to some one else, as it began to appear that my chance was no good anyhow. At last the door opened and a beckoning hand invited me in, and I went in to warm and to tremble.

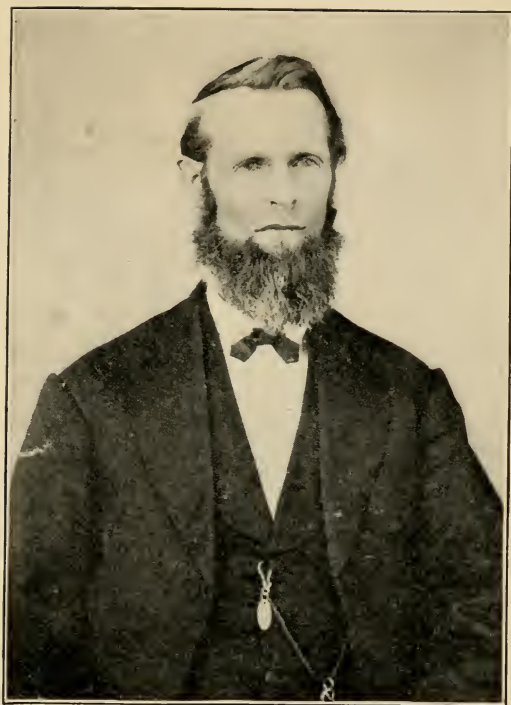
The presiding elder informed me that they had kept me out in the cold rather long, which I knew, and that when they did come to a vote there was a tie and the quarterly conference had instructed him to give the deciding vote, which he would do after asking a few more questions. The questions being answered to his satisfaction he voted in my favor.

The elder then gave me three items of advice for my guidance and help. "First, whenever you have an appointment to preach, before you stand in the presence of the audience have your theme well in your mind. If you go before an audience without a theme you will be at sea, and will be able to accomplish but little.

"Second, be sure to think out some points (not all) on the theme, and be thoroughly familiar with them. You must know and understand that which you would have your audience know and understand.

"Third, be sure to quit when you are done, and not talk your points out of mind by promising to say one word more, and then talk on for thirty minutes."

Some years later, I learned something of the attitude of the members of the quarterly conference, during the two hours I was out in the cold. After considering and debating my case a long time, the presiding elder put to vote the matter of recommending me for license, and the vote stood three in my favor, three against me, and seven not voting at all. The presiding elder's vote in my favor elected me, and it was apparent that it was by a very narrow margin that I entered the ministry. Those who were opposed to recommending me argued, as I was told, that I had but recently come from the East, where I had been reared as a Presbyterian; that I had been a school teacher and had worked up a grammar class in school; that I had also taught the



REV. J. G. BALDWIN—1860

reading of notes to music ; consequently most of the members of the quarterly conference feared that my preaching would be from my head and not from my heart. It was to my mind a clear case of knowing too much, which was quite an uncommon situation.

My license was granted and the papers signed by Presiding Elder Stewart, who kindly bade me God-speed, declaring that he had no doubt of my success.

I was permitted afterwards to be the pastor, the presiding elder, and the General Conference delegate of the members of that quarterly conference, and enjoyed sweet fellowship with them for years, but they have every one received the summons, and are now where toils and cares are ended, where I hope to see them, every one, by-and-by.

In preaching my first sermon I took for my text the first Psalm. I chose to take the whole Psalm, for I feared running out of matter if my text were a short one. The appointment was at my home church on a fine spring day, and some one had started the report that the presiding elder was to be there to preach. That brought a house full, and then it was circulated that the report of the presiding elder's coming was one of my jokes. Afterwards, however, the person who was responsible for starting the story volunteered to publicly own that he had started the joke.

My sermon ended in time, but I soon learned that too many points in one sermon are not easy to manage,

As a local preacher I was not a success, it seemed to me. Preaching just enough to get my official character squeezed through the quarterly conference did not agree with my disposition, or with my call or conscience. I felt that preaching must be the work of my life. I took my good wife into counsel. After a thorough and prayerful consideration of all the circumstances we concluded that I should continue the work upon the farm as usual, but hold myself in readiness to take a charge whenever the Lord should set before me an open door. Then peace of mind came, and it was not long that we were left in suspense. Occasionally an appointment for a Sabbath would be filled at the churches at various places, but no responsibility seemed to be attached to the work.

There was an exhorter in our vicinity who proposed that he and I make appointments on a certain Sabbath day, I to preach and he to exhort, thus assisting each other. The plan was to have three services, the first at the Methodist church at Canaan Center in the forenoon; the second at the Stratton schoolhouse in the afternoon; and the work of the day to close with a third service at St. Paul's Lutheran church, which was occupied at the time by the United Brethren people.

The eventful morning came with the singing of birds, and in the joyous springtime we began our journey on foot in primitive style, filled with the hope of making the world a little better by that day's work. The morning services were said to be

excellent, and we were cordially invited to come again. We were given our dinner and in due time were on our way to the afternoon service some two miles distant, much elated over the morning's work. A great crowd assembled at the schoolhouse, which was another evidence of our growing popularity, as we opined, and after the sermon and exhortation there was much handshaking with many compliments and congratulations.

Soon we were on our winding way to the evening appointment, feeling that we were prepared for any emergency, but little knowing what was in store for us. The house was crowded, with half the township present, including many of my previous pupils, and besides, right in the center of the audience, immediately in front of the pulpit, was a local preacher, a member of the annual conference. He asked to be excused from taking a seat on the platform. To my mind all at once he began to appear as a veritable Goliath, ready to slay green beginners.

My boldness and self-confidence and every other kind of confidence evaporated at once, and when my text for the evening had been read three times I was unable to utter a sentence. I was down and out. As I sat down I told the exhorter to go ahead, which he attempted to do, but it was no go with him, and the best I could do was to turn the services over to the big local preacher in front of the pulpit. He, coming into possession of the floor, at once called me by name, and advised me to dismiss the

meeting, as there was "too much devil there that night for any one to do anything."

I was relieved that some one knew what was the matter, and very gladly hastened to carry out the suggestion, and with equal gladness hastened from the place.

I had received my lesson, and it was so impressed upon me that it could never be forgotten. I am glad to record that for the sixty-four years since I have never been placed in a like pitiable plight.

It was a chagrined and humiliated pair who walked the four miles of our way homeward that night after the severe lesson, sadly commenting upon our elation of the morning, and of our overthrow in the evening. I remember very distinctly a remark I made to my comrade as we wearily jogged along that May evening. "John, I am pretty sure that my call to preach has come to an end, and I expect from present appearances I shall never undertake a job of that kind as long as grass grows or water runs." In reply he said, "You will get over that," and we walked on in silence.

CHAPTER VI.

A TRAVELING PREACHER.

I found that it was not possible with a clear conscience to get away from the vow which I had made in my wife's presence, and with her advice and approval. That vow seemed ever to be before me, but how it was to be fulfilled I did not know.

Quite early in the morning of June 17, 1854, Presiding Elder Slutz rode up to my house as I was feeding the pigs, and saluted me with a good morning. He declined my invitation to alight from his horse and come in, as he was on his way to hold a quarterly meeting at Brunswick mission. Instead he asked me to change my apparel, saddle a horse, and go along with him to spend the Sabbath. I made the excuse that there was so much to do on the farm at that time of the year, and that I did not see how I could spare the time. My wife overhearing the conversation came forward and said, "You had better go. I can do the chores just as well as not, and it will do you good." I soon was ready and in due time we reached the place.

After dinner we went to the schoolhouse where the presiding elder preached a short discourse, and then called the quarterly conference to order. It was revealed that there had been no preaching on the charge for three months, and the preacher was

ill and likely would never be able to preach again. The presiding elder inquired of the quarterly conference if the members desired a preacher to fill out the year. They answered that they so desired. "Whom do you want?" was the next question, and to this they answered that the selection would be left to the elder. Without a word of counsel with me he said to the conference, "Seeing you have empowered me to select a man for the place, I hereby appoint Brother Baldwin, who is present, to supply the charge for the remainder of the year, and he will preach for you this evening."

The announcement was like a cloudburst to me. For a few moments I was so overwhelmed that I could not utter a word. Conference presently adjourned and I made for the woods about half a mile west of the schoolhouse, and there the matter was settled for all time. A vow was made that to do my Lord's bidding and follow his leading should be my fixed purpose as long as life and health were vouchsafed.

The way in which I was enabled to keep this vow was marvelous. The financial end of the situation adjusted itself readily, the work on the farm was easily done, and nothing blocked my way to hinder my filling the six appointments of the charge for the remaining three months of the year at a salary of \$48.10. In addition there was \$15 missionary funds appropriated by the annual conference. The next session of the conference returned me to the charge for another year.

The annual conference that year was held at Alliance, in Stark County, Ohio. Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner presided. I was one of the twelve licentiates, all of whom were received into the conference and granted license to preach the gospel. Of the twelve, ten have gone to their rest and reward, and as this is written, two, Rev. L. L. Hager, of Erie Conference, and I, are left to expectantly watch and hope. The preacher who was ill when the charge fell into my hands, was Rev. A. Crum, who died in triumph soon after my taking the work.

We moved to the charge immediately after the conference session, and went to work preaching, visiting, and in all ways possible stirring the people to activity in preparation for a revival. I found there were all sorts and sizes of isms, and soon learned that it was much more difficult to get people to go and keep going in the right direction than I had expected. Many did not know the truth when they saw it, it seemed to me, but the year was one of valuable training for the work of preaching. I found that there was a saying among the older preachers of the conference that the mission was an excellent charge on which to test a young hand, to see whether he had the stuff in him to endure the work, and if he seemed determined upon victory he was fit to work anywhere.

We had some revival interest and made many life-long friends, some of whom are in the paradise of God to-day.

On that charge I received my parents into the fellowship of the United Brethren Church, as recorded in a previous chapter. I incidentally learned a good bit about living, a good bit about keeping a family while in the ministry at that time, of the work that had to be done in the hay and wheat fields, in the hoeing and husking of corn, digging of potatoes, etc. That year I earned something building a barn for one of our valued members.

The next year was spent on Nelson Mission with six appointments. At once we moved to the charge and engaged in the work of the itinerancy in real earnest, preaching, visiting, comforting the sick and sorrowing, besides doing manual labor at times to pay expenses. There was but one church house on the charge, our meetings at other points being held in schoolhouses, and occasionally in private houses, in barns, or in the woods. A good deal of interest was awakened during the year, and at one point a good revival was had, a new society organized, and a church house built.

At the next annual conference Nelson Mission was attached to Fowler Circuit, constituting a charge of sixteen appointments, and I with a colleague was sent to the work. The helper never came.

We moved at once to Fowler, near the center of the charge, in order to travel the territory to the best advantage. I undertook to fill the appointments every two weeks until my colleague should arrive, but he finally sent word that it was too much

work to do in four weeks, and so resigned. The quarterly conference then arranged that the work should be entirely in my charge, three local preachers to assist as I should direct, and that when I should be engaged in holding revival meetings they should fill the other appointments. This worked right well and was continued for two years. Nearly four hundred were converted in the three years that I spent in that territory and three houses of worship were built.

Those were years when I learned a good deal about the managing of family finances, and also those of the church. The day we moved to Fowler I wrote a letter to my wife's folks, and then found that there was no money in the house nor a five-cent postage stamp. Whom to ask for money I did not know, for it was rumored in that locality that the only thing we were after was their money. So the letter was stowed away in my pocket and developments awaited. The following Sabbath my preaching appointment was in a schoolhouse over the line in Pennsylvania. A good audience greeted me, and after the services some time was spent in greetings and visiting, that I might learn the names and faces of some of the people. Among those whom I met was a middle-aged woman, who diffidently approached me and after the handshake modestly inquired, "Do you need any money?" That was a question that had not been put in the program for the day, and it nearly took away my breath, but I managed to say that I could use a

trifle more than I then possessed. She said, "I have not much means, but I feel it my duty to do what I can." She handed me fifty cents. I never saw a fifty-cent piece before or since that looked as large as that one did. People who become rich suddenly through some unexpected legacy, I opine, feel a little as I did. I went to my evening preaching some five miles distant with revived hopes, and somehow I came to believe that God would not permit me to suffer.

The following Friday, just as I was about to start to fill my appointments at the end of the charge where I had been pastor the previous year, my wife came to the buggy and said: "James, we have no flour in the house, not a bit. We have half a loaf of bread and a little cornmeal, which will do for me and Charlie until you return on Monday, and as you are going where you are well acquainted, perhaps you can get flour from some of our friends to bring home with you." I agreed to try, and started.

My text on which I intended to preach that evening at Braceville was, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God," etc. Thinking and praying as much as I did, as I journeyed on, the flour would slip into my thoughts and cause confusion in the sermon making. Thus the conflict raged until I came in sight of my stopping place and then I said: "Lord, help me to trust the flour to thee. I am not able for it, and to preach beside." As a cloud disappears before the wind, so the problem

of the flour went from my thought and rest and trust came and not a thought of it returned to annoy me during my preaching.

When the meeting was dismissed and greetings were the order, a Mr. Smith came to shake hands and to inquire about my family, and how we were getting along. Before parting he asked if I could come by his house on my way home on Monday. I replied that I could if necessary, although it was a mile or more out of the way. He said, "I have been hauling flour to Warren and thought that you could put a sack in your buggy to take home to the family, if you could come this way as well as not." "Oh," I said, "to be sure, I shall be glad to come this way and take dinner with you, and accommodate you by hauling away some of your flour." I was there at the appointed time and had a splendid dinner and formed a pleasant acquaintance with the family, who once had been members of the German Lutheran Church, but two of the sons had been converted at the meeting which was held by me the year before, and all came into fellowship with the United Brethren Church soon afterwards.

As I was leaving for home the host said, "Now, about that flour of which I was speaking to you last Friday evening, can you take it with you?" Replying in the affirmative, he said, "I think you are entitled to two sacks if you can carry them." I expressed the opinion that it would be possible, as the horse was willing and the buggy was strong. Forthwith two sacks of flour were placed beneath

the buggy seat, and I went on singing and rejoicing. From that time to this, I believe that the Lord knows how and when to provide flour for us, with all things else needed. So I bless and praise his name.

One time on this charge on opening the door of the schoolhouse after the services I saw a large man in his shirt sleeves walking to and fro in front of the house swearing at me for coming to the vicinity and publicly holding him up before the congregation, telling them how he got drunk, abused his wife, and was guilty of other bad things. In his ravings he said it was not fair for me to take advantage of him in that way, and that he would give me a sound thrashing if I would just step out into the road. I told him that he was mistaken, for I had never seen him or heard of him before in my life, and I assured him I did not want to be thrashed and would not come out, advising him to go home, and that when he came to soberly think it all over he would see his mistake. Then his wife and a few friends gathered about him and persuaded him to put on his coat and go home. The brethren assured me that he would feel very mean over it when he became sober. And so it was, for as soon as the booze that possessed him had spent its power he was profuse with his apologies. I had the joy of seeing him soundly converted afterward, and of receiving him into the United Brethren Church where he walked as a man victorious over drink in the name of the Lord.

When it came time to present the missionary cause I found to my sad surprise that very many were opposed to missions. They told me that it was not right to send money to other localities when it was so badly needed at home. One man declared that he would not pay me anything if I should preach missions. Well, I saw that light was needed there, and at once I made up my mind to preach on the subject of missions at all appointments on the charge.

The next Sabbath I began the work at a place called "Brimstone Corners," since named Wildare, supposed to be a more respectable name. In my sermon that day I dwelt at length upon our duty to practice economy in order to have something to give to spread the gospel in the whole world. I urged economy in dress, and in the avoidance of unnecessary luxuries. I illustrated from my own experience, as I had bought a suit of clothes a few days before. One suit had been offered to me at \$15, another at \$12. The cheaper suit would be as serviceable as the other, the difference being that the \$12 suit would not shine as the other, just like Brother Johnnie Simons' vest, and thus the \$3 would be spent for the shine alone. Brother Simons was greatly stirred up at my remarks. He was a sincere German who dressed neatly in a plain brown suit, but by some means had a fine satin vest, which to my mind, did not correspond to the rest of his attire. I saw that he was greatly excited, as were some others, and knew that I was in for it. Then

with paper and pencil I went through the audience asking each person to subscribe and give to missions as he was able. When I came to Johnnie he astonished me by pulling off the vest and handing it to me saying, "Take that." I felt that the best thing to do was to take it, and then I offered it for sale for the cause. Brother William Clemmens helped me out by offering \$2 for the vest, and it was passed over to him and the cash given to me. After the service Brother Clemmens took the vest to Johnnie and explained that the preacher had merely used the vest as an illustration, not meaning any harm, and that he should take his vest back and it would be all right with the preacher. He cooled down and took the vest. The cause of missions got the two dollars, and the community got lots of fun and good cheer out of the incident. To this day some of the older people talk and laugh about the incident. The best of all was that never again was there offered any opposition to my preaching missionary sermons, and Brother Simons was a faithful friend. I was in that vicinity a few years after and made inquiry in regard to Brother Simons, and learned that he had removed to a place in the southeast of the county, where there was no United Brethren church, and where he worshiped in another church a mile or two from his home, and this story was told me:

One morning in the autumn he was late in getting ready to go to church, and while hurrying about his chores he had occasion to go to the

cellar. Becky, his wife, handed him a vessel, asking him to draw some sorghum molasses for breakfast. As the molasses ran very slowly, he left the vessel under the open spigot and attended to other duties, intending to get the molasses when the vessel should be filled. In the meantime Becky had made some changes in preparing the meal so that the sorghum was not needed. As soon as the hasty breakfast was eaten they drove Gilpin-like to church, arriving after the services were well begun. They were seated but a few minutes when suddenly, without a word of warning or explanation, Johnnie jumped to his feet, exclaiming, "Oh, mine Got, Becky, the molasses! the molasses!" The two rushed to the door while several men followed, thinking he had suddenly gone mad, but Johnnie was specially intent on getting into the conveyance as soon as possible, and with Becky he started pell-mell for home. The interested onlookers saw that he evidently had no time or disposition for explanations. Reaching the cellar the faucet was turned to stop the flow of sorghum, but a goodly quantity of the contents of the barrel had obeyed the law of gravitation, and was wasting its sweetness on the cellar floor. Johnnie took a philosophical view of the situation, saying, "Well, I raised the sorghum myself and made the molasses, and I have not lost much but my labor, but I did not intend it to be used for this purpose." The incident was a source of merriment over all that part of the county.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ITINERANT IN WAR TIMES.

The autumn of 1859 found us on the Erie charge with six appointments. Those were stirring times just preceding the Civil War, and all was commotion in Church and State, and the possibility of building up the Church seemed small. Especially was this true in the United Brethren Church, for we were known to be "black abolitionists," and all sorts of charges were made against us as being dangerous to the welfare of society.

Besides my work of preaching and visiting, the provost marshal of Erie, Pennsylvania, appointed me to enroll all who were fit for military service in the township where I lived, Elkcreek Township. I went to work at once and my report was the first one in, and the marshal told me afterwards that it was the cleanest and most complete of any in the county. As I went about my work, I found large posters on the trees and fences addressed to Uncle Sam with the challenge "Draft if you dare." But Uncle sent fourteen hundred persons dressed in blue suits, and the draft went on without any trouble, excepting hot words and dire threats.

It fell to me to be one of the first to be drafted, and on the very day I received the notice, I reported to the provost marshal. He promptly told me that he would not allow me to go to war, as I was too

tall; the enemy would shoot my head off the first day. He also informed me that there was other work for me concerning which he would inform me later. I went home and in a few days a letter came asking me to come to Erie, but to do so without giving any one the least hint as to my having any business with the marshal.

Of course I went, my curiosity being aroused as to the reason for secretiveness. Once in the presence of the marshal he explained that there was a goodly number who were drafted and had hired substitutes, and that when the money was paid over to the substitutes they went to Canada. Some received a bounty and also went to Canada. Others were unpatriotic cowards, and were ready to desert their country. This, with similar information was given me, and then he explained the work he desired of me. As I was engaged in traveling throughout Erie County, I was to be on the lookout for any of the characters described, and to report to him. In the meantime nothing was to be said or done that would lead any one to suspect that I was engaged in that kind of work.

So I was instructed and so I went to work, no one but my wife knowing of it. I served in this position while in that county about three years, and succeeded in reporting perhaps a dozen men who were guilty of bounty jumping, deserting, or cheating the Government in one way or another. Some of them paid dearly for their mean business. One rich old fellow was fined ten thousand dollars for

the part he took in the unpatriotic procedure. But I had to be very careful not to let any one know of my business as I traveled to and fro in the county.

It was suggested to me that it would be proper for me to carry a revolver, a custom quite common. I had a revolver in my hip pocket a half day, and was in constant fear that it would go off at the wrong time, and I laid it aside. I preached one evening in a schoolhouse in a community generally credited with being a southern sympathizing community. I was there in hunt of a man who was supposed to be in Canada, but who was in the congregation before me, as I learned before leaving. It was whispered to me that he was there with eight or ten men with revolvers to guard him, as his family lived in the district and he was home on a furlough. The Government had him well in hand within the next twenty-four hours. I felt relieved when I was done with the whole business.

While I was on this charge my wife had the typhoid fever in the most malignant form. She hovered between life and death for fifteen long, tedious weeks, four of which were a blank to her ever after. But God heard and answered our prayers, and she was mercifully restored to us and spared for fifty-four years, even to a good old age, as we count duration. I cease not to praise the Lord for his gracious providence in sparing her to such a good age to be a blessed example of patience, hope, and charity, and to come to the end of her life

among her kindred and loved ones peacefully and in glorious triumph.

I was next sent to Fowler Circuit, the charge having been divided, there being about half the number of preaching places as when I traveled it previously. The quarterly conference in fixing my salary agreed to pay one dollar a sermon, no account to be taken of donations or presents. I managed to preach as many sermons as seemed really necessary and no more. At the end of the year it was found that two hundred and twelve sermons had been delivered, and two hundred and thirteen dollars had been received, I therefore, being overpaid, but the quarterly conference generously allowed me to keep the additional dollar.

At one of the appointments there was an old brother who, in the class meetings, was always saying things in a way no one else could say them. Twice he was absent from the meetings, an unusual thing. At the third service he was there, and after preaching he arose in the class meeting and stated the reason for his absence. He had been in spiritual darkness and despondency for four weeks, but as he was at work plowing in the field a passage of Scripture came to him that gave him great comfort, and his darkness disappeared. The passage was this, "Faint heart never won fair lady." The brethren thought it was my duty to inform the brother that his scripture was home-made and not to be found in the Bible, but I said, "No, he had gotten help from it, let it go at that."

In the same neighborhood was a family not belonging to our church but regular attendants. I was often invited to stop with them. One Saturday, I drove to the house and was invited by the woman of the house to put up my horse, she stating that the men would soon be in for supper, and the horse be fed and cared for. On going in the woman said: "I am so glad you came to-night, for I have hunted in the Bible all this week for a passage of scripture that father used to quote often to us girls when we would get to cutting up and whistling and dancing, but I can't find it anywhere. It was, 'Whistling maids and crowing hens always come to some bad ends.'" I told her that I had heard that sentiment, but was quite sure it was not in the Bible. It might be poetry, but was very poor poetry, and I had no idea who the author was. She was incensed at my remark, and said she was sure it was in the Bible, for her father was great on the Bible and would not have quoted it so often if it had not been there. I soon saw that there was no chance to change her mind, and I advised her to continue the search in the Bible, and when she had found it to write and give me the chapter and verse, and I would be greatly obliged. I have not heard anything more of the matter though some fifty years have come and gone.

The war spirit was abroad in all the land at this time, and was very much in evidence on a portion of Fowler charge. We had withal a good re-

vival spirit at two places, and over one hundred were converted and joined the church.

At one place our church was burned, being totally destroyed in the midst of a sweeping revival. As the church was near the schoolhouse the meeting continued therein. There was a man in the vicinity who had threatened us, and so the trustees arrested him, but there was not sufficient testimony to convict him. Twice he was arrested, but we failed to make a clear case and so gave it up until further proof could be secured. The man whom we suspected was a large landholder, and was considered wealthy. After while it came out that he had had a confederate in the burning of the church. The two had quarreled about the pay and the confederate "let the cat out of the bag." To avoid being arrested again, and to settle the matter the man bargained with the trustees to give them five acres of land and to build as good a church as the one which had been burned. This was done, and several years later I had the satisfaction of holding a quarterly meeting in the new church, and the man who was the principal in the burning of the former church, was one of my auditors. After services I spoke to him about the matter and he said that he was done with such business.

There was a remarkable conversion of a noted infidel in that meeting. The man's wife was a member of the United Brethren Church, and with her children, was a faithful attendant. She was anxious that I should visit her husband and talk

with him and examine his infidel library, of which he was very proud, boasting of his weapons to be used in combating the silly notions of Christians. The next day I visited the home, arranging to take a meal there. After a little talk with the man, it was apparent to me that his whole effort had been to find what he wanted to find, and, of course, he found it. I declined to be led into an argument with him, but examined and praised his fine library, remarking that his books were all on one side of the question. "Where are the books on the other side?" I asked. "Are you willing to look earnestly and candidly into the matter from our side of the question, and will you read a small book that I will furnish you? Are you afraid to study the other side?" He replied, "I am not afraid to read anything you choose to send me, and if there is good sense in it, I think I am able to recognize it." I said no more to him and on returning to my home, I selected a small volume entitled, "Cause and Cure of Infidelity," by Dr. Nelson. The book was in his hands when his wife came to church at the next service, and he was an eager student from the moment he began to investigate.

I saw no more of him until the next Thursday evening. After dismissing the meeting and as I was passing out of the door of the church, his hired man came to me in great haste and said that Alex had sent him to tell me to announce in public that he was done with infidelity, and had made a bonfire of his costly books and asked the prayers

of the congregation. It was an opportune time to make the announcement at once; as the weather was mild the people were visiting before going to their homes. As soon as the announcement was made there was such an awe of stillness apparent as I had never beheld in an audience before, and I have not experienced the like since. The people appeared to be afraid to stir but they quietly retired, and the next day we found that it was all true as reported, and Alex came out fair and square upon the Lord's side, greatly to the discomfiture of Satan's followers.

I had all sorts of experiences during the meetings in the schoolhouse after the church had been burned. Some were bitterly opposed to our work, and sought to drive us away by all means they dared to employ. The preacher's position was in front of the blackboard. One night as I knelt in prayer there was a constant noise about the blackboard in my rear. After the service the brethren made an examination to find out what ailed the blackboard, and they gathered up a dozen eight-penny nails, which had been thrown at me, but evidently with poor marksmanship, as not one hit me. This was repeated the next night, but the enemy's skill was no better, for not one was allowed to touch me. I spoke of the incident in my sermon, and stated that all who were in the audience were upon the one side or the other. Either they were with the person who threw the nails, or they were on the side of the right, and all unrepented sinners would have

to be counted with the one who threw the nails. When mourners were invited one man went across the aisle and taking his wife by the hand said, "Let us get off the side of that feller that threw the nails." They went together to the altar of prayer, and were happily converted.

Some of our people advised me not to go to that appointment to preach, as the hostility, resulting from the war spirit, was so great that they might kill me, accidentally or otherwise. It was not so much that they were against me; the church was the foe which they hated, because its members were "black abolitionists," and many did not know enough to know what that meant.

I have read in one of Wesley's sermons that a preacher is immortal until his work is done. It appeared as if the statement is true, for the man who threw the nails afterwards confessed that he did his best to hit me, but I had a charmed life. So I lived through the year, and am living some fifty years later. War is a great calamity, and I have often prayed that there might never be another.

Two of my brothers were in the Civil War, and both were spared to return to their families. My youngest brother, John, was a captain in the 13th Michigan V. I., and was in thirty-three regular battles. He was wounded but once, in the engagement at Chattanooga, when he was hit by a sharpshooter after the battle was over. He was in the battle of Shiloh, and captured a whole regiment of the Mississippi Confederates, or what was left

of the regiment, there being a few over six hundred, and took them to Johnson's Island as prisoners of war. When the papers were being made out only eleven of the number could write their names, one of whom was the colonel, and he was found to be an uncle of ours, our father's brother John, the next to the youngest of nine sons. But it was war.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRAVELING PREACHER, PRESIDING ELDER, GENERAL CONFERENCE DELEGATE.

In 1863, I was elected presiding elder and sent to the Erie District. Six times afterwards was I elected to the same office, serving seven years in all, and when not in the presiding eldership, I served various charges. I must say that the office of presiding elder was not to my liking. There seemed to be too much waste of labor; too much variety, even though variety is the spice of life. The honor was considerable, but was not equal to the honor and pleasure of being on a charge where one could keep account of his sons and daughters in the gospel. It is just the place for those who are fitted for it.

At the first quarterly conference which I was permitted to hold, the pastor asked me where he would be sent next year. I told him that if I had my way he would be sent home to stay, for a man who is planning to move from his charge before he had been on it three months is not the man to secure results. He did not vote for me as presiding elder again.

The presiding elder has to deal with the vexatious questions of all sorts in helping to solve the problems of the pastor or of the members, questions of salary or financial matters, which keep the presid-

ing elder constantly between the upper and lower millstones, until he is ground pretty thin. On the other hand, when I was pastor I was always grateful to have the presiding elder put in his appearance and take the work in hand for a few days, and then pay him and send him rejoicing on his way.

After a year's service I failed of reëlection at the session of the conference of 1864. Canaan Circuit had had some serious disturbances, and the presiding elder informed me that there was a request from the officials of the charge that I be sent there, as I was well acquainted with the situation, and would know how to manage it better than any one else. On Canaan Circuit I had taught school, had received license to preach, and had married my wife, so it seemed like going home, and we were glad to get upon a circuit once more, even if there were prospects of a conflict ahead.

Brother John Noel was my colleague. He was an excellent preacher, but his health was not robust, and he needed rest after preaching a sermon. So it fell to my lot to hold nearly all the protracted meetings during the winter. He would undertake his share all right, then his strength would fail and he would have to go home to recuperate. For fourteen weeks during the winter I preached and sang and worked in revival services every night in succession except one. In the spring the ague set in to help me out, and at the time of the session of conference I was nearly finished, both physically and financially. I asked the conference to grant me

a "location" for one year with the hope that a year's rest would restore me to my normal condition.

Then the question arose, Where shall we go, and what shall I do? With nervous prostration, weighing 138 pounds, unable to read or study, I felt that I could never, never preach another sermon. My salary was all spent, and all the funds I had accumulated before preaching were gone except \$142. With this we had to begin the quest for health and funds. Well, some of my wife's folks lived in Akron, Ohio. A new house had been built on what is now Buchtel Avenue, and I was offered the upstairs to live in if I would finish it off. I accepted this proposition in October, 1865. We were settling in our new quarters, and I felt that it would be my last abode on earth. But something must be done to procure bread and butter. My wife's brother came in one Saturday morning and proposed to go with me to the manufacturing establishment of Weary, Snyder, and Wilcox to look for a job. When I entered the plant with its humming planers and buzzing saws and turning lathes, I said to myself: "This is the place for me. The odor of pine lumber is the thing." Presently one of the proprietors, D. G. Wilcox, came along and I was introduced to him. He asked, "What can you do?" I said that I was a broken down preacher, but had the trade of carpenter and joiner, and could turn a top or make a gunboat. "What wages do you want?" he asked. My reply was, "I want just what I can earn." I told him that I was not very strong

at the time, but expected to regain my health. "Well," said he, "you are just the man we want. Come next Monday morning, and we'll try you two weeks, and see what you can do. We pay every two weeks."

I was on hand Monday morning to hear the whistle blow and learn what my job was to be. The greetings of the morning were passed, and I was asked if I could fix buzz saws so that they would run right. I replied that I could do it splendidly. "Well, we wish you would, for there is hardly one in the shop that does its work. Go at it, and take your time, and if they are fixed that is what we want." So that was my first work in the establishment. The saws were gummed, filed, and made to run true. The guides on the tables were twisted and had to be put through the Daniel's planer to get the twist out. Other machinery connected with the buzz saws was not properly doing its work, and I was kept busy during the two weeks of my being on trial; my work met their expectations.

On Saturday afternoon Mr. Wilcox passed through the shop with the pay envelopes. When he handed me mine I thrust it into my pocket and said to myself, "I don't want to know what mine is until I go to supper." I kept wondering whether it would be \$1.50 a day or less. In due time when supper was ready I proposed to open the envelope and see. Wife said, "We had better eat first, and we will be better prepared for what we see." How-

ever, we were both anxious to know, and the revelation was soon made to our astonishment and delight. We found \$27, the most money I had ever received for twelve days' work in my life, \$2.25 a day, and butter forty-five cents a pound, but who cares! That supper was eaten with as much relish and thanksgiving to God as any supper since the expulsion of our first parents from the garden of Eden.

The following morning I was installed in charge of a room with a man and two or three boys, where lumber was prepared for the building of houses and barns. At that time, the fall of 1865, Akron had just well started to grow, and the demand for building material was great.

I had my hands and mind fully occupied, with no time to be sick. In the good providence of God the nervous prostration passed away in the dust and odor of pine lumber; my weight increased to 165 pounds in six months; my wages were \$3 a day and the prospects roseate.

At this time I ventured to preach occasionally, and went with Brother Crubaugh to schoolhouses in the country about the city. My first preaching in the city was in the Baptist church. The pastor was ill, and one Friday Mr. Wilcox came to me as I was at work in my department, and asked me if I could preach a Baptist sermon the next Sabbath, as their pastor was ill. I told him that I could preach a sermon that would do the Baptists good; I was sure of that, so I was in for it. I preached

morning and evening, and they were very profuse in their thanks and congratulations, and invited me to come as often as convenient. I preached several times at Grace Reformed Church and the First Methodist Episcopal Church, and the following winter rented a hall on South Main Street, and held a week's meeting, at which five persons were converted. I baptized them in the little Cuyahoga River, at North Howard Street. I have made inquiries in regard to those who were saved at that meeting, and learn that all have gone to their rest in the paradise of God, and all had kept the faith to the end.

A small class of United Brethren people was organized, and we had preaching occasionally in different homes on North Hill, called at that time "The Chuckery."

My period of rest lasted two years instead of one. In that time my health was fully restored. I found that the way for me to gain health was to work, rather than to be peddling patent medicine or taking it, or dabbling in real estate, or other occupations that are regarded as more refined. The shop was the place for me, where there was work to do and wages. Steady toil nine or ten hours each day, and no fear when the day's work was done—employment concerning which some one else had to do the thinking and planning, and I had only to work and receive my pay.

When the second year was nearly ended and the annual conference was approaching I began to feel

that I must keep my vow to the Lord, and again engage fully in the work of the ministry. It was circulated among the employees that I was planning to leave in September, and go to preaching. One day Mr. Snyder came into my department and inquired as to the truth of the report. I assured him that it was true, as I had made a solemn promise to God that when my health was restored I would again preach, and now that my health was good I felt it would not be safe to stay in the shop any longer. He suggested that they would pay me more money than I could get for preaching, and that I had better stay. I was worth five dollars a day to them, and they proposed to pay me a salary of twelve hundred dollars a year. I told him that the money would never satisfy my conscience, and that it was a clear conscience I proposed to have. So the matter was settled, and I left on the first of September.

At the session of the conference held at Clinton, Ohio, in 1868, I was elected presiding elder and assigned to the Erie District, which I had traveled in 1863. In the former year I had received in salary \$351.28. It was a little better in 1868, being about \$400. I served the same district in 1869, when the salary was \$523.60.

That year I had my first experience as a delegate to the General Conference, which was held at Lebanon, Pennsylvania. When I returned I was asked how I regarded being a delegate to the Gen-

eral Conference, when I told them to please never elect me again.

At that time in the history of our Church there was much confusion in regard to our position on, and method of dealing with secret organizations. "The contention and confusion was enough to bewilder an angel," I told some, and assured them that I would not want to hear another three days' entangling discussion in debate, such as took place in Lebanon, for all the honor and money there was in it. The secrecy question would get mixed with nearly every other interest which came before the conference; missions, election of officers and editors, the selection of trustees of our institutions—no matter what came before the conference, every delegate was expected to look sharp and see if the man, the subject, or the enterprise, had or had not the mark of the beast.

But my voice and vote availed not in the matter of my election, and the annual conference continued to elect me as a delegate to the General Conferences for five terms, the last being in 1885, when the conference met at Fostoria, Ohio, at which time was reached the beginning of the end of this source of dissension in the Church.

My time from the year I left the shop in Akron, 1868, until the session of conference in Loraine, 1901, thirty-three years was fully employed in the work of the presiding eldership and the pastorate, we living in Ashland, Burbank, and Nova most of the time.

Then being nearly seventy-seven years of age, at my request the conference retired me from active service, and gave me the position of conference evangelist, and in that relation I have served ever since.

My last regular charge was Nova, Ashland County, Ohio, where we spent three and one-half of the most pleasant years of our lives, but the death of our only son made our hearts ache, our only solace being that he died in the triumph of the faith.

CHAPTER IX.

A CHAPTER OF MISCELLANIES.

This last chapter must needs have in it some variety.

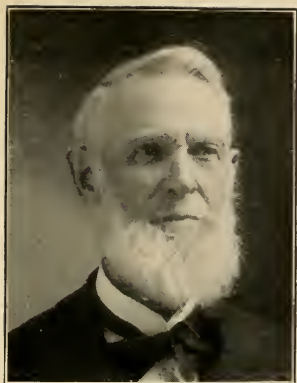
The sixty-four years of my ministerial life, counting from the receiving of quarterly conference license, have not been as I anticipated. I had thought that if I were to tell the story of Christ as I had known it, all who heard would at once fall in with it and turn their faces toward the heavenly city. But I soon learned something of the depravity and obstinacy of human nature, and how men are disposed to listen to the siren song of Satan, "There is time enough." There are *excuses* without number for neglecting to "get right with God," but not one valid *reason* for delaying. The best thing in this life is being right with God, but there is a universal tendency in human nature to neglect to take the necessary steps. I soon found that I had to deal with human nature as it is. I found, too, that love, plead, entreat, weep, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine as I might, with the Holy Spirit to attend the efforts, yet multitudes would go carelessly on down to perdition.

All this was amazing and discouraging to me, and it remains the most difficult problem in saving the world. "Who is sufficient for these things?"

On being relieved from the responsibility of an

active pastor, and being given work as conference evangelist in 1901, we moved to Akron, Ohio, it being the forty-fourth time we had moved during our married life. The question then to be answered was, "How are we going to live?" I was too old to work in any of the manufacturing establishments. That means of earning a livelihood was not open. I had no appetite or qualification for anything but to preach, and it would be more difficult for me to quit the preaching business than it was to begin at first. My wife and I, therefore, agreed to just wait on the Lord, and see what he should do for us. It was not long until a door was opened for me to do work here and there, and the door has never been closed. I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, for it was indeed that kind of a vision to us, and from then until these words are written, over ten years, I have not had to ask a man for a dollar, nor have I been so poor as to cheat or steal. Many of the Sunday schools of the conference have been very generous in their offerings for my support every year on my birthday, the 15th of December.

Quite a number of my friends have thought that I ought to marry them ere I pass away, as I have the reputation of tying the knot so that it does not easily slip. All of these have been very generous in their fees, and once my breath was nearly taken away when I found a twenty-dollar bill enclosed in an envelope, which was placed in my hands as my friends left. My wife opened the envelope



REV. J. G. BALDWIN

MRS. ELEANOR BALDWIN

As widely remembered in East Ohio Conference



REV. AND MRS. J. G. BALDWIN

Last Photograph

and said, "It is twenty dollars." I told her she must be mistaken, and when we discovered that it was really and truly twenty dollars, we just sat down and cried like children, not knowing what we were crying about.

I have been called upon to conduct funeral services at various places in the conference during my more than ten years of retirement, and my expenses have always been paid, and sometimes I have received more, just "to keep me alive and going," as one brother said.

Years ago, when I refused a salary of twelve hundred dollars to accept three hundred and fifty dollars a year for the sake of paying a vow and of being on good terms with a good conscience, it seemed as if I was running a great risk. Some of my friends said that it was too much like the spirit of fanaticism. I then said that if I were to stay in the factory and be suddenly killed with a buzz saw, or by the bursting of a boiler, or a fly-wheel, or in some other manner, a danger imminent at any time, what good would money be to me? It would intensify my remorse, and that is an awful word! I will go and preach and fill my part of the contract. And so I did and have continued in the business until the present time, and God has kept his part of the contract.

It has been the paramount object of my life to publish abroad the old, old story, which is to make this world what it ought to be. In fulfilling this mission, we have lived as happily and as free from

carking cares as any millionaire that dwells in the land. We have a thousand tables where we are cordially invited to eat, and are welcomed in a thousand nicely furnished homes with their blessings and conveniences and good fellowship among the very best people who dwell this side of the gold paved city. So we have been tenderly and bountifully cared for all our days, and my faith says, "Surely his goodness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

The United Brethren Church has been a priceless blessing to me. To be sure there have been "fightings without and fears within," leadings that looked dark, afflictions and bereavements which were mysterious, but the Lord, by his word and his people, came in good time for our rescue. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." He delivers by taking the afflictions away, or by taking one away from the afflictions, or by giving grace to bear them. Great is our God in his resources, and great are his people who are organized to work under his direction and in partnership with him.

During these years I have sought to work under God's supervision and with him. I have made mistakes and blunders, but none as bad as if I had sought to evade labor and responsibility. I can truthfully record that the whole trend of body, mind, and soul for more than three score years has been to

be a cheerful worker, a man that needeth not to be ashamed.

It is perhaps proper for me to record as well as I can a summary of my work during my ministry of sixty-four years.

I have appeared before the people at various times and places with the best message ever given to man, perhaps fourteen thousand times.

Over one hundred evangelistic meetings have been conducted by myself on various fields of labor, in each of which from six to one hundred and seventy-five have professed conversion.

I have received into the United Brethren Church by right hand of fellowship nearly fourteen hundred persons, and have the best of testimony that many of them are to-day in the paradise of God.

Some eight hundred couples have been united in marriage by me, and as far as I have been able to learn there has been but one divorce sought or granted.

I have been called upon to officiate at the funerals of some twelve hundred persons. On one field of labor, I had thirty-one funerals during a year, and thirty-one marriages.

I have been honored with nearly every official position in the United Brethren Church, except class leader and bishop. I was secretary of the annual conference thirty-one years; secretary of Otterbein University Board of Trustees thirty years; trustee of the United Brethren Publishing House and secretary for eight years; trustee of our theological

Seminary eight years; besides being presiding elder seven years, and a delegate to the General Conference five times. I might mention here as a pleasantry that at the General Conference held in Canton, Ohio, in 1909, I was spoken of as the "Bishop of the East Ohio Conference," and I heard no dissenting voice. As a bishop is an "overseer" I accept the honor, and shall seek to magnify the office by continual watching and prayer, especially for the pastors, that they may read Paul's second letter to Timothy, second chapter, and read it frequently. Amen.

* * * * * * *

And now this story of my life must come to a close. I have sought to give the plain facts of a humble life as they have been seen and known by myself, without pretense to scholarship or embellishment. It has been a blessing to me to thus live over again my life, and if those who peruse these lines find some of the joy and strength in their perusal that I have found in recording them, I shall be repaid for all my toil.

My earthly race is nearly run. As I look about, I see that most of my comrades of life's noon have gone from my sight. I feel almost alone. Occasionally I think I hear some one calling tenderly for me to "come home," and I can almost see the hands that are beckoning me to follow, to show me that there is some one waiting over there on the farther side of the river. And so, when the call comes, "Child, come home," I trust that I may

slip away quietly and in great triumph to dwell among the throng of blessed immortals.

MY PRAYER.

O most merciful God, cast me not off in my old age; forsake me not, if my strength faileth. May my hoary head be found in righteousness. Preserve my mind from dotage and imbecility, and my body from protracted disease and excruciating pain. Deliver me from despondency in my declining years, and enable me to bear with patience whatsoever may be thy holy will.

I humbly ask that my reason may be continued to the last, and that I may be so comforted and supported that I may leave my testimony in favor of the reality of religion and of thy faithfulness in fulfilling thy gracious promises. And when my spirit leaves this clay tenement, Lord Jesus, receive it. Send some of the blessed angels to convey my unexperienced soul to the mansions which thy love has prepared; and oh, may I have an abundant entrance ministered unto me into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

—DR. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER.

KNEELING AT THE THRESHOLD. *

I'm kneeling at the threshold, so weary, faint, and
sore,
Waiting for the dawning, the opening of the door.

Waiting 'til the Master shall rise and bid me
 come
 To his most glorious presence, the gladness of his
 home.

Chorus—

Kneeling at the threshold, weary, faint, and sore,
 Kneeling at the threshold, my hand is on the door.

A weary path I've traveled, 'mid darkness, storm,
 and strife,
 Bearing many a burden, and struggling for my life.
 But now the morn is breaking, my toil is almost
 o'er,
 I'm kneeling at the threshold, my hand is on the
 door!

The friends that started with me, have entered
 long ago,
 One by one they've left me, still struggling with the
 foe,
 Their pilgrimage was shorter, their triumph sooner
 won,
 How lovingly they'll hail me, when all my toil is
 done!

Methinks I hear the voices of lov'd ones as they
 stand
 Singing in the sunshine of that fair and happy
 land.

Oh, would that I were with them, amid the shining
throng,
And mingling in their worship, and joining in their
song!

With them the blessed angels, who know no grief
or sin,
See them by thy portals, prepared to let me in!
O Lord, I wait thy pleasure, thy time and way are
best,
But I'm all worn and weary, O Father, give me
rest!

A SERMON.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SURE AND SECURE POSSESSIONS.

Text.—Matthew 6: 20. “Lay up for yourselves
treasures in heaven.”

Let us tarry for a time and scan, as we may have
ability, our future possessions beyond this present
state, a place called in the Bible, *heaven*! I wish
to call attention to three general items concerning
the “laying up of treasures” in that place.

1. Why lay up treasures there?
2. Of what do those treasures consist?
3. When are we to lay them up?

First, we are to lay up treasures in *heaven*, be-
cause there is such a place. The Scriptures plainly
reveal to us the truth of the real existence of such
a place, a place of unspeakable glory and felicity.
The longings, fancies, and imaginations of the race

of mankind intuitively look for a satisfaction to correspond with those longings and soul hungerings. The great Creator has in everything that we know anything about, made the law of correspondence plain. For example, have we hunger, there is bread somewhere to satisfy that hunger; are we thirsty, water is given to satisfy that thirst. The bird has wings, there is air in which to use those wings; the fishes have fins, water is given for their use and pleasure. Do we desire knowledge? over against that desire there is an ocean of facts to find, which may take an eternity to give employment to our powers, and yet never be able to say, we have learned it all! And would it not be an unkind and unusual thing to be expected of a great and good Creator to thus make his offspring with such longings and thirstings, and at the same time provide no ray of hope of a state wherein these visions of their fancies could be realities! So we must conclude that because of our being in possession of these powers, which he has given us, he will in due time give those who are duly prepared for the state, the full fruition of their longings, and thirstings; and it is intimated that it will be more than, "eye hath seen, or ear heard, or hath entered into the heart to conceive what God hath in reserve for those who love him." A good place for treasure to be laid up!

Second, *a safe place*. No moth or rust to corrupt, no thieves to break in and steal; all such characters

are imprisoned in their own place, forever barred from the abode of the good and pure.

“Those holy gates forever bar
Pollution, sin, and shame.
None shall obtain admittance there
But followers of the Lamb.”

No breaking of banks, no depreciation of values there; our inheritance cannot be taken by another by stealth or intrigue; mine will be mine, world without end! And it cannot be squandered, but it may be increasing in value and satisfaction. I am disposed to think so. Certainly a safe and secure and sane place to lay up treasure is in heaven.

Third, we should lay up treasure in heaven, because it is to be our *home*. We are to *live* there; our abode forever. Living, yes. An old brother was sick unto death, and as he lay upon what was supposed his dying couch, expecting a daughter from the West, who soon arrived and immediately spoke to him to see if he could still recognize her, he called her name, to her delight. She then remarked, “I am so glad to get here before you passed from the land of the living to the land of the dying.” “Oh, no, daughter!” said he, “not so, I am near *home* where the *living* are; where they live and never die, where they abide.” These were his last words to his daughter this side of the river. What a triumphant exit; what a joyful home-coming! And then what a gathering that will be when the saints all arrive to enter their *immortal* home, and come into their immortal treasures, immune

from sickness, disease, death, loss, separation, and all that annoys or disturbs us here.

“Where no fear or dismay, neither trouble nor sorrow,
Will be feared for a day, or be feared for the morrow.”

Lay up treasures where we are to absolutely live and where we shall live the longest! It would be wise to have our principal treasure there. A little may do here, as our possessions will soon be in other hands, even if we stay here a thousand years.

“But I shall know the loved ones gone before,
And joyfully sweet will the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The Angel of Death shall carry me.”

What are the treasures to be laid up there?

First, a treasure of *thought*. Think of its being “our Father’s house.” So Jesus named it, consisting of “many mansions.” May it not mean the universe and the many worlds? No doubt but this world, in which we now live, is but a speck, and but a small one at that, among the countless worlds rolling in space. Think of the magnitude, the beauty and harmony in their construction and movements, and no mortal is able to exaggerate or overdraw anything in regard to their existence. “Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord.”

Also think of the inhabitants of the Father's house. None are there but the pure, the good, and lovely, those who are fitted for the place, the immortals. Certainly he who is able to clothe the mortal with immortality, is also able to make a place, a sphere, a state, or outward condition to correspond. There is a vast deal more in a state of immortality than we have thought of, or can think or dream of.

I love to think of the place and read of it, as it is pictured in the Bible, and think that when I get there it may be possible I shall be able to say: "I have thought of this and this, but still this is much more than I was able to conceive in my mortal state. It is in line of my thought and conception, but far, far beyond my farthest flights of fancy and imagination!" "But what must it be to be there? Oh! what must it be to be there?"

I wish to so think of the state and place as to be able to say when I am permitted to arrive there, "This is congenial; this is my *home*, better than I deserve, a sinner redeemed, saved by grace; the gift of God through Jesus Christ my Lord, to him be endless praises!"

Then our *words* are to be laid up as treasures there. Good words, instructive and comforting words. "Words fitly spoken," what a benefit they are—"like apples of gold in pictures of silver." How a word of cheer may nerve the weary, foot-sore pilgrim, how it may lighten the burden of the bereaved and afflicted, and in how many number-

less ways may a good word be spoken which will help the fallen to rise, much more than words of criticism or blame. They will be remembered; they will never die; they are words of truth and love, and are immortal. We shall find them laid up in the books of record in our Father's house.

Thirdly, good *deeds* are to be laid up, will be on record in heaven. Our Lord makes it plain in the twenty-fifth of Matthew that *doing* something is counted in the final settlement; namely, "Inasmuch as ye have *done* it to the least of these my brethren, ye have *done* it unto me." And in the tenth chapter of Matthew, the forty-first and forty-second verses, the persons who have the smallest talent may find encouragement. He says, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." That is, if he *does* the work of a prophet, though not a prophet, he shall receive a reward the same as a prophet. That is as fair as any one could desire. And again, "Whosoever shall *give* to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

We are to be careful to *do* good deeds in His name and for his praise and glory, not to boast of, or to be praised of men, or with any selfish spirit, but whether we eat or drink, and "whatsoever we do" is to be done in the name of him who has done all good for us. Such deeds will be laid up

as our treasure in heaven, never to be lost or forgotten.

When are these treasures to be secured and laid up?

First. In the *days of youth* is as good a time to begin as we can suggest, or as can be found by scripture or reason. We seek a preparation in youth in order to act our part in mature years. A trade, profession, or business which we expect to pursue, we are wise to begin in youth. Oh! how many have been filled with regret because of listening to the siren's deceptive song, "There's time enough yet."

Second. While in *health* we should be careful to lay up some store against the eternity to come. Every *day* lay up some treasure. The time is brief at the longest, and the chance to *do* is liable to be taken away any moment. I was urging a strong man, some twenty-five years ago, to become a Christian at once. He said, in a very light and trifling manner: "If this was the *last* meeting I would ever attend of this kind, I would, but I shall, from the appearance of my health, have lots of chances. If I were as feeble as my wife is, the matter would be settled at once, to-night." Well, it was the *last* meeting of the kind that he ever saw. He passed on to the other side more than twenty years since, but the feeble wife is still living and has a hope of living in the land where sickness and death can never enter. I have personally known

of scores of similar cases, and how difficult it is to persuade fallen humanity to run no risk!

The time for laying up treasure in heaven is now. It is God's time, and the only time we can call ours. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time, behold, *now* is the *day* of salvation!" No time to squander, no opportunities suffered to slip away, all chances too soon will be gone forever! The work must be done in *this life*, or it will never be done.

You must lay up for *yourselves*; it cannot be done by proxy. Wife, husband, son, or daughter, the rich or poor, wise or unlearned; each and all, for himself or herself, must take a personal interest in this business, or it will be an absolute failure. The loss will be no less than eternal!

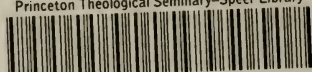
What a joy the soul has, which is conscious of the possession of treasures laid up in heaven! What comfort comes to him who day by day, is adding to the immortal possession, and with what exultation he can sing,

"Peace! Peace! Wonderful peace,
Coming down from the Father above;
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray,
In fathomless billows of love!"

Oh, blessed state, and blessed life to live on earth;
with such assurance of unmeasured and untold
wealth laid up in heaven!

THE END.

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